

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 INR-07 L-03  
ACDA-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06  
TRSE-00 NSC-05 /074 W  
-----172233Z 038289 /73

R 171045Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7473  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
USMISSION NATO  
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 6802

E. O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, CSCE, GW,UR  
SUBJECT: OPPOSING FORCES TRAINING PROGRAM (OPFOR)

REFS: A. STATE 106613, B. BONN 8322

1. BEGIN SUMMARY:  
EMBASSY AGREES WE MUST PROCEED CAREFULLY BEFORE INITIATING  
OPFOR PROGRAM IN FRG AS OUTLINED IN REF A. WE WISH TO  
POINT OUT SOME PROPAGANDA ASPECTS WHICH WE BELIEVE SHOULD  
BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MAKING FINAL DECISION AND IN  
PLANNING EXERCISE SHOULD DECISION BE TO GO AHEAD WITH OPFOR IN  
FRG. END SUMMARY.

2. FIRST, IT IS NOT CORRECT TO SAY, AS REF A DOES, THAT  
THERE HAS BEEN NO SOVIET REACTION OF OPFOR THUS FAR. ON  
MARCH 30 AND APRIL 3 KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, CENTRAL ORGAN OF  
MOD, CARRIED SHORT ITEMS REPORTING ON OPFOR. WASHINGTON  
TASS REPORT PRINTED MARCH 30 REPLAYED AP ACCOUNT AND  
CRITICIZED OPFOR AS "A NEW, PROVOCATIVE VENTURE" OF  
THE PENTAGON. APRIL 3 KZ HAD LONGER "RETORT" BY  
REGULAR COMMENTATOR COL. A. LEONT'YEV WHICH DRAWS  
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HEAVILY ON AP STORY TO DENOUNCE PROGRAM IN STRONG  
LANGUAGE AS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, "DANGEROUS IN OUR  
NUCLEAR AGE." LEONT'YEV TAKES PARTICULAR EXCEPTION  
TO USE OF SOVIET UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT FOR THOSE  
PLAYING ROLE OF "AGRESSOR" AND POINTS TO ENTIRE EXER-  
CISE A FURTHER EXAMPLE OF COLD WARRIORS PUMPING UP  
"SOVIET THREAT" FOR THEIR OWN NEFARIOUS PURPOSES.

3. THERE IS NO SUGGESTION IN EITHER PIECE THAT SUCH EXERCISES BEING CONDUCTED IN U.S. DESERVE MAJOR ATTENTION. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT SOVIET PRESS WILL CERTAINLY NOT MISS OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE MAXIMUM PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE FROM ANY SUCH EXERCISE CONDUCTED IN FRG. FIRST, IT WOULD BE CLOSER TO HOME FOR THEM AND, IF IT INVOLVES FRG FORCES EVEN AS OBSERVERS, IT WOULD SERVE THEIR PURPOSES TO SHOW U.S. AND FRG IN COLLUSION ON "ANTI-SOVIET" EXERCISE. SECONDLY, HOLDING EXERCISE IN EUROPE WILL ENABLE THEM TO POINT TO IT AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF "PROVOCATIVE" NATO EXERCISES WHICH ARE NOT IN SPIRIT OF CSCE. THIS LATTER HAS BEEN CONSTANT THEME OF SOVIET PRESS COMMENT ON NATO EXERCISES WHETHER NOTIFIED UNDER CSCE RUBRIC OR NOT. IF OPFOR WERE OF SUCH SIZE AS TO REQUIRE NOTIFICATION, SOVIETS WOULD BE EVEN MORE LIKELY TO USE IT, PARTICULARLY WITH BELGRADE SO CLOSE AND GIVEN SOVIET DESIRE TO GATHER AMMUNITION FOR USE, IF NEEDED, IN BELGRADE.

4. WE WOULD SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT WE PROCEED ON ASSUMPTION THAT SOVIETS WILL TRY TO GAIN PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE BY POINTING TO OPFOR AS PARTICULARLY OFFENSIVE TO THEM AND NOT IN SPIRIT OF HELSINKI. THIS MIGHT MEAN THAT WE SHOULD NOT INITIATE OPFOR UNTIL AFTER CONCLUSION OF BELGRADE II IN DECEMBER OR JANUARY.

5. ALSO, WE ARE INTRIGUED BY REFERENCE IN REF A TO  
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SOVIET CONDUCT OF SIMILAR PROGRAM IN USSR WITH CAPTURED U.S. EQUIPMENT. WE WERE NOT AWARE OF THIS, ALTHOUGH IT DOES NOT SURPRISE US. WE WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING MORE ABOUT THIS SOVIET PROGRAM AND KNOWING WHETHER EVIDENCE OF THIS CAN BE INCLUDED IN CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE SINCE IT WOULD ASSIST IN NIPPING ANY SOVIET PROPAGANDA EFFORT IN BUD.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY TRAINING, MILITARY PERSONNEL, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), MILITARY EXERCISES  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** OPPOSING FORCES TRAINING PROGRAM (OPFOR)  
**TAGS:** PFOR, MILI, GE, UR, US, CSCE  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009